

# Proverbs 23:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.

## Analysis

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Drunkards and gluttons 'shall come to poverty'—excessive indulgence produces economic ruin. 'Drowsiness' (stupor from overconsumption) leads to wearing 'rags' (poverty's marker). This continues the warning from verse 20 by describing consequences. Those who pursue pleasure squander resources and neglect productive work, inevitably ending in want. The principle extends beyond literal drunkenness to any form of excess that prioritizes gratification over stewardship. Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit; lack of it demonstrates carnality. Believers must practice moderation in all things, stewarding resources wisely and avoiding enslavement to appetites. Discipline yourself or reap discipline's consequences.

## Historical Context

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Ancient societies recognized that chronic drunkenness and gluttony led to poverty. Despite modern wealth insulating some from immediate consequences, the principle remains: indulgence produces dysfunction.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. What areas of indulgence or lack of self-control are leading you toward spiritual or material poverty?
2. How can you cultivate greater discipline in eating, drinking, and consuming?

## Interlinear Text

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א. קָרְבָּעַ יְמִינָה כִּי סְבָבָ אַ זְוִילָל יְמִינָה שְׁמִינִי

H3588 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty a man with rags  
H5433 H2151 H3423 H7168

ב. נָמָתָה תְּלֵבָה יְשָׁמָעָה:

shall clothe and drowsiness  
H3847 H5124

## Additional Cross-References

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**Proverbs 21:17** (Parallel theme): He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

**1 Corinthians 5:11** (Parallel theme): But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

**Galatians 5:21** (Parallel theme): Envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

**Philippians 3:19** (Parallel theme): Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

**Proverbs 19:15** (Parallel theme): Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.

**Deuteronomy 21:20** (Parallel theme): And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard.

**Joel 1:5** (Parallel theme): Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.

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